



ALEX PAUK, music director and conductor

Saturday, March 4, 1988

Jane Mallett Theatre

PROGRAMME

Rain Coming (1981-82)	Toru Takemitsu
Cantus in memory of Benjamin Britten (1980) for string orchestra and bell	Arvo Pärt
*Divertimento No. 10 (1988) for piano and string orchestra	John Weinzwieg

Jon Kimura Parker, piano

INTERMISSION

*Tonfigur Nr. 6	Gerhard Ginader
*Variants	Timothy Brady
*World Premiere	

Tonight's concert is being recorded by CBC Radio Music for broadcast at a later date on Two New Hours.

The Esprit Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following:

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The Principal Clarinet Chair for the 1988-89 season is sponsored by Buffet-Crampon.

A special thank you is extended to CAPAC for sponsoring this evening's performance of Timothy Brady's Variants.

Mr. Weinzwieg's work was commissioned by Jon Kimura Parker through a grant from the Canada Council.

Mr. Ginader's work was commissioned by The Esprit Orchestra through a grant from the Manitoba Arts Council.

Jon Kimura Parker: Pianist

Jon Kimura Parker's career continues to take him to all corners of the world, performing both in recital and with the world's most renowned orchestras. The Vancouver-born pianist has won hundreds of competitions, both at home and abroad; however, it was his brilliant triumph as the First Prize Winner at the Leeds International Piano Competition which catapulted Jon Kimura Parker into worldwide prominence.

In Canada, Jon Kimura Parker studied for ten years with Edward J. Parker and continued his studies with Lee-Kum Sing at the Vancouver Academy of Music and with Marek Jablonski at the Banff Centre. In 1979, he entered the Juilliard School as a full scholarship student of Adele Marcus and was twice winner of the International Piano Competition in Vina del Mar, Chile. He has returned to South America for concert appearances, including a debut with the Santiago Symphony.

Highlights of past seasons include a performance with Washington's National Symphony Orchestra in London under Rostropovich, with the London Symphony Orchestra under Klaus Tennstedt, and European tours with both the Royal Philharmonic and the Scottish National orchestras. More recently Mr. Parker gave his prestigious orchestral Carnegie Hall debut as featured soloist with the Halle Orchestra under the direction of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski on a United States tour. He has completed a major recital and orchestral tour of Japan, followed by recitals in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

An avid champion of new music and new ideas, Jon Kimura Parker commemorated the International Year of Canadian Music in 1986 with the premiere of a new work by Steven Gellman for piano and DX7 synthesizer, commissioned with the support of the Ontario Arts Council and the Touring Office of the Canada Council. Last spring Mr. Parker again premiered a work he commissioned for solo piano by Alexina Louie titled SCENES FROM A JADE TERRACE.

In 1985, he was honoured by the Canadian Music Council as their "Performer of the Year", and was also the subject of a nationwide television documentary on CBC's The Journal.

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PROGRAMME

*L'Enfant de la Terre et Ciel Etoilé Spur (for accordion and orchestra) Divertimento No. 6 (for saxophone and string orchestra) Great Woods Fanfare (Short Ride in a Fast Machine)	Denis Gougeon Arne Nordheim John Weinzwieg John Adams
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* Esprit Commission - World Premiere

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Rain Coming (1981-82) Toru Takemitsu

Rain Coming is one of a series of "rain" pieces which I have written. Other pieces in this series include Garden Rain, for brass ensemble (1974), Rain Tree for vibraphone and two marimbas (1981), Rain Spell, for two violins, and so on. The "rain" series as a whole belongs to Waterscape. My intention is that the pieces go through the various metamorphoses aiming at the sea of tonality, just like water which circulates in the universe.

Rain Coming is a variation of colour on the simple figure which appears at the beginning of the piece, played mainly on the alto flute. The work is dedicated to The London Sinfonietta, who commissioned it.

Toru Takemitsu

Toru Takemitsu, born 8 October 1930 in Tokyo, is mostly self-educated except for a brief period of study with Yasuji Kiyose (1948-50). With painters and composers he organized in 1951 an experimental workshop in Tokyo, Jibben Kobo, and in 1958 joined the Institute for 20th-Century Music, which sponsored annual summer workshops in contemporary music. In 1966, with Toshi Ichibanagi and Seizi Ozawa, he founded a biennial festival for contemporary music called Orchestra Space. For the 1970 World Exposition in Osaka he conceived and became artistic director for Space Theater, a concert hall equipped with laser beams and 800 loudspeakers. He has composed in all media, including numerous film scores. Timbre has been always an important concern in his music. Often, the initial conception in his compositions is derived from a symbolic linguistic synthesis that suggests subsequent musical development.

Cantus in memory of Benjamin Britten (1980) Arvo Pärt

The orchestra piece Cantus is dedicated to the memory of Benjamin Britten. "In the past years we have had many losses in the world of music to mourn. Why did the date of Benjamin Britten's death - December 4, 1976 - touch such a chord in me? During this time I was obviously at the point where I could recognize the magnitude of such a loss. Inexplicable feelings of guilt, more than that even, arose in me. I had just discovered Britten for myself. Just before his death I began to appreciate the unusual purity of his music - I had had the impression of the same kind of purity in the ballads of Guillaume de Machaut. And besides, for a long time I had wanted to meet Britten personally - and now it would not come to that."

Arvo Pärt

Arvo Pärt was born in Paide, Estonia and grew up in Tallinn. His own cryptic remarks on his compositions orbit around the words "silent" and "beautiful" - minimal, by now almost imperilled associative notions, but ones which reverberate his musical creations.

Arvo Pärt's music tends to extremes. One senses its roots and its spirit, but the structure of the music is harder to grasp. A curious union of historical master-craftsmanship and modern "gestus", it is music that could have been written 250 years ago and yet could only be composed today. It is Vivaldi and Erik Satie, and impressive "musique pauvre" that has discarded all its structural moorings - music whose sparse tones are so intensified that any and all sense of the lackadaisical is eliminated, music that just as it is about to die away, blooms with infatuation. "That is my goal. Time and timelessness are connected. This instant and eternity are struggling within us. And this is the cause of all our contradictions, our obstinacy, our narrow-mindedness, our faith and our grief." Musically, all the ages mingle at the break of Arvo Pärt's dawn.

Cantus: a personal threnody: an ultimate closing chord: a mystical, threshold experience.

Divertimento No. 10 (1988) John Weinzwieg
for piano and string orchestra

John Weinzwieg's interest in the Divertimento genre began with No. 1 for flute and strings (1945-45) which was awarded the silver medal in the Arts Division of the 1948 London Olympiad. From time to time he has returned to its neo-classic, concerto-like, lively-tempered three to five movement form to add other instruments in a solo capacity: oboe, bassoon, clarinet, trumpet and trombone, tuba. All are marked by fresh insights into their sonic personalities propelled by high rhythmic energy. Since the third divertimento (bassoon), the jazz-swing-blues inflections have become a stylistic trade-mark. No. 10 (1988) for piano and string orchestra, like No. 6 (saxophone) and No. 7 (horn), favours the extended single movement - a sequence of twelve dialogues between the strings and the solo piano. They are not however dialogues based on imitation, but rather on divergent temperaments. The strings, with their own inner dialogue between the upper and lower sections, project an introspective mood in a slow tempo within a 5/4 metre that occasionally contracts to 3/4. The piano maintains a distant stance with responses in fast tempos and lively rhythms; they express the extrovert in opposition to the introvert. In the course of the dialogues, the strings' instrospection undergoes a gradual increase in harmonic tension that takes on a persuasive tone, and by episode 11, the piano is converted to the string temperament. Finally, against a burst of string tremolo, the piano hurls random motives that gradually subdue the orchestra into silence. The work was commissioned by John Kimura Parker with the assistance of the Canada Council.

John Weinzwieg

As a composer and teacher, John Weinzwieg has had a profound influence on music in Canada. In 1951 he was a founder of the Canadian League of Composers and its first president. Since his retirement from the University of Toronto his creative output has been directed to the guitar, harp and piano. Five premières are now in preparation. A film documentary on his creative life, by Rhombus Media, will be released next Fall. His many honours include the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario and the Molson Prize of the Canada Council.

CONDUCTOR - Alex Pauk

Born and educated in Toronto, Alex Pauk undertook further studies in conducting in Japan. After settling in Vancouver and becoming a key figure in that city's new music scene, he returned to Toronto in 1979 to concentrate on composing concert and film music. Since founding THE ESPRIT ORCHESTRA in 1983, he has maintained a continuous creative output including orchestral works (MIRAGE and Echo Spirit Isle), chamber works (Water from the Moon and The Seventh Aura for electric strings), and a radiophonic montage (Nomad). During the current season Mr. Pauk will have a major new piece, Cosmos, premiered by the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec.

Tonfigur Nr. 6 (1987) Gerhard Ginader

A few years ago I wrote a piece which became involved with a compositional process for which no previously coined label could be found. I affixed the term "Tonfigur", Figur being a shape, code, metaphor, character, a being at once real and disembodied (add your own definitions if you like). The last one, Nr. 6, was commissioned by Alex Pauk through the Manitoba Arts Council and written for the Esprit Orchestra in 1987.

Just to which elements of the process a listener's ear will become attached will be a matter of personal reception. Most striking for many will likely be the wide emotional range, juxtapositions, mixing of new messages with fragments from music history, intrusion of natural elements into constructed networks. The latter might take you to a context of ceremonial wellsprings of an artform which loves to behold its basic building blocks, its ever-present story of creation. Often listeners report the popping up of childhood memories which will then trigger their own sound theater interpretation of subsequent events.

Along any track and in any event, it will be yours, the listener's, music.

Gerhard Ginader

My childhood and youth in Germany could be described as a state of immersion (without knowing) in music, literature, traditions. After the second year at Musikhochschule I dropped everything and went to work on a cousin's farm in Illinois. The late sixties and all of the seventies found me in the then center of the world: California. Among some other degrees I picked up a Ph.D. at UC Berkeley in 1981 and moved temporarily to Winnipeg, for a job and out of curiosity, having no concept of the Prairies. I have been on them ever since, teaching at Brandon University and directing the new Electronic Studio there now. My most favourite quote - Franz Joseph Haydn after leaving Vienna for the Esterhazy estate: "Far removed from the centres of culture, I have no choice but to experiment."

Gerhard Ginader

Variants (1982) Tim Brady

Variants (1982) is a work which combines aspects of two compositional forms: the orchestral variations and the concerto for orchestra. The piece is structured around three "statements"; where the musical material is presented at its most dramatic and intense; linked by nine variations, where each idea is presented and developed on its own.

- Statement 1 - a quick succession of the nine principal textural themes of the work
- Variation 1 - a dense sustained harmonic texture
- Variation 2 - oboe cadenza, followed by an accompanied oboe solo
- Variation 3 - sustained string chords interspersed with canonic melodic lines, finishing with a brief viola melody
- Variation 4 - French horn solo accompanied by melodic strings and fragmented winds
- Variation 5 - for twelve players divided into four equal quartets (one wind, three strings)
- Statement 2 and Variation 6 - a duet scored for solo timpani and unison strings
- Variation 7 - sparse texture for solo winds
- Variation 8 - accompanied 'cello solo, followed by a 'cello cadenza
- Variation 9 - brief viola melody accompanied by violent attacks in the strings
- Statement 3 - a huge orchestral cluster which slowly disintegrates with reminiscences of earlier variations

Variants calls for a virtuoso orchestra, not only for the four solo parts (oboe, French horn, timpani, 'cello), but also for the complexity of many of the ensemble passages. Though written seven years ago in a much more complex musical language than my current work, Variants was a very important piece in my development as a composer. It was the first of my works to show a personal approach to form and orchestration, key elements in the development of a distinctive compositional style.

Tim Brady

Composer/guitarist Tim Brady was born in Montréal in 1956 and began playing guitar at the age of 11. His formal musical studies include degrees from Concordia University (Montréal) and the New England Conservatory of Music (Boston), as well as conducting studies with Odaline de la Martinez in London. Since his late teens, he has been interested in both composition and improvisation, which led to his twin careers as a composer and jazz guitarist in Toronto in the early 1980's. Recently his interest has been in combining the electric guitar, composition and improvisation in a highly personal style. As a composer, he has written many chamber and orchestral works, won several major prizes and been commissioned by groups in Canada, Europe and the United States. A four time winner of the CAPAC Young Composer's Competition and a finalist in the CBC Young Composer's Competition, in 1986 Brady also won the CAPAC-sponsored Micheline Coulombe Saint-Marcoux award for orchestral music. Brady is currently based in Montréal.